

HCT Technical Assistance Committee Meeting
December 14, 2007 ~ 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Attendees: Gus Byrom, Bruce Brensdal, Mat Rude, Maureen Martin, Leslie Edgcomb, Kathryn Bartholomew, Frank Kromkowski, Gerry Watne, Penny Cope and Pam Higgins (via speaker phone)

Discussed HCT meeting held in Governor's office on December 10th. We must produce a 5 to 10 year plan which will address and solve some of the affordable housing problems in Montana.

The Technical Assistance committee will have the first opportunity to produce tangible deliverable results.

Current plans –

- Create a HCT website Technical Assistance section
- Add a list serve to send out notices of updates and spread information
- Prepare White Paper to support legislative issues (responsibility of HCT Resource Committee)
- Technical assistance must include checklist that communities can use to determine their housing needs....from first meeting through hiring consultants
- Develop a good, clean Community Affordable Housing Needs Assessment Survey – Gus will use CDBG's as template
- Develop a "cheat sheet" that could be used to direct callers to correct program
- Develop a web page that will guide potential users to the programs that they qualify for
- Teach communities the value of hiring feasibility and marketing analysis, when appropriate
- The "road show", using Glendive as an example, is a useful tool if a community is ready for a face-to-face conversation with program managers. North Dakota does this personal outreach, as well.

It was agreed that communities need guidance to survey their situation and focus on their needs.

We will begin with a simple guidance sheet to help communities with their initial conversation about their housing needs.

Communities need to prepare an inventory of what they have – infrastructure, streets, sidewalks, rentals, senior housing, starter homes, etc.

How does a community request help?

- We need a T.A. team.
- HCT will be the initial contact point for a technical assistance request
- We will have a list of contacts for each program
- We will invite and involve the CRDC's and the HRDC's for the requesting community

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We should approach the Big Sky and the CDBG Economic Development staff, who are awarding funds to communities for economic development, and seek closer cooperation vis-à-vis workforce housing, as they provide economic development assistance.

We should add a housing technical assistance component to MEDA's Resource Team Assessment groups. Gus will make Gloria O'Rourke aware of the HCT's T.A. efforts.

Also, the technical assistance team needs to create a follow-up process.

Remind communities that each decision that they make about housing will impact other housing needs and teach them how to analyze that "domino" effect.

Our formalized process is:

1. Direct communities to web site; HCT, which will include a checklist and a guide for community discussion and which will link to Consolidated Plan
2. Suggest that community prepare a Needs Assessment Survey, coordinated with any existing community Growth Policy (community master plan, comprehensive plan, etc.)
3. Meeting with HCT Technical Assistance team
4. Prepare feasibility and market studies, grant writing, program applications, etc.
5. implementation

Urge communities to do their homework, first. We will help them as they do their homework and then we will be available to give technical assistance and guide them to the next step.

We will attend the Rural Community Conference in Billings on January 15 and 16 to collect information on how to better deliver technical assistance and will begin to promote the HCT Technical Assistance team.

Next meeting: January 25th, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. in large conference room.